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**Rediscover Christmas**  
**Finding Joy in Our Uncertainty**  
**Luke 1:5-7**  
**Eric Smith**  
**December 13, 2020**

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**Sermon Summary**

Advent is the time we focus on the arrival of Jesus. This year our Advent theme is Rediscover Christmas: Good News in Troubling Times. Each week, we are focusing on a different attribute of God represented in the coming of Jesus: hope, peace, joy, and love. Through these traits, we are learning how we can rediscover Christmas despite the challenges, hardships, pains, and discouragements we might be experiencing. Because Christ has come to be Immanuel, God with us, we can experience joy no matter what discouragement we may be going through.

**Diving Into The Message**

*"In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old"* **Luke 1:5-7, NIV**

*"The Lord has done this for me. In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people"* **Luke 1:25, NIV**

*"When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: 'Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!'"* **Luke 1:41-45, NIV**

And Mary said:

*"My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors."*

**Luke 1:46-55, NIV**

## **Three Takeaways:**

### **1. EMBRACE THE HAPPINESS OF JOY**

*“Be happy and full of joy, because the Lord has done a wonderful thing.”*

**Joel 2:21, NCV**

### **2. EXPERIENCE THE STRENGTH OF JOY**

*“Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.”*

**Psalm 51:12, NIV**

*“Nehemiah said, ‘Go and enjoy choice food and sweet drinks, and send some to those who have nothing prepared. This day is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, for the joy of the LORD is your strength’”*

**Nehemiah 8:10, NIV**

*“Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls”*

**1 Peter 1:8-9, NIV**

### **3. EXPRESS THE GLADNESS OF JOY**

Our joy is possible because it is built on God’s ALL encompassing sovereignty, goodness, grace, gladness, and redemptive purposes in our lives.

*“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything”*

**James 1:2-4, NIV**

*“But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation”*

**Psalm 13:5, NIV**

# LIFE APPLICATION SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

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## Life Application Questions

1. Think of a time you were discouraged. Maybe you are discouraged right now. Please allow yourself to be honest as you take an “inventory” of your discouragement. What was/is the cause of your discouragement?
2. Read Luke 1:5-7 and note the contrast of Elizabeth's inability to have a child to her being righteous, obedient and blameless. Have you ever experienced discouragement because you felt like you were doing all of the “right” things, yet everything seemed to be going wrong?
3. How can the example of Zechariah and Elizabeth help you find joy in your discouragement?
4. Read Joel 2:21. The prophet Joel instructs us to be happy and full of joy because the Lord has done wonderful things. List the wonderful things has God done for you?
5. Evaluate this statement, “Our joy is possible because it is built on God’s ALL encompassing sovereignty, goodness, grace, gladness, and redemptive purposes in our lives.” Do you agree or disagree? Why?
6. Read Psalm 13:5. How are you trusting in the unfailing love of God?